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aspect as a cerebral motion is absolutely mechanical. Every idea is a definite brain structure and in its action it is as much subject to the law of mechanics as is the falling stone. But is the meaning of the idea mechanical? Here lies the problem.

Not finding room in this number for the exposition of this important subject, we must be satisfied here to let the representatives of both sides have their say and for ourselves will only reserve the right to discuss the problem in the near future. P. C.

WRONG GENERALIZATIONS IN PHILOSOPHY.

SCHOPENHAUER AND FREUD.

One common source of error in philosophy has been the principle of generalization wrongly applied. For the sake of explaining phenomena we must understand that a higher development produces new conditions which are absolutely absent in the lower strata of life. Now it happens that some philosophers take features typical of the highest and most complicated forms of existence and generalize them to explain the nature of lower forms. Others do the reverse. They generalize the lowest forms and explain all higher features as mere repetitions of simpler modes of activity.

As a typical instance of the wrong generalization of the higher forms of life over all lower manifestations, we refer to Schopenhauer and his theory of the will. When the stone falls the naturalist calls it gravity, and we ask with surprise what is the impulse that makes the stone fall. Schopenhauer answers, It is the will. The stone wills to fall to the center of the earth according to the Newtonian law and that explains the phenomena of gravitation. Goethe makes Mephistopheles in his rôle of professor say to the student that man is pleased to hear words:

"With words 't is excellent disputing;
Systems to words 't is easy suiting;
On words 't is excellent believing;
No word can ever lose a jot from thieving."

The opposite course, but in principle the same method, is followed by Freud who bases his psychology upon the erotic instinct. The higher life of man is enfolded in a rich complexity of noble and sometimes highly altruistic tendencies, in the love of parents, devotion of children, love of country, of ideals and many aspirations. Observers of life stand in awe before the wonders of

the human mind, the sacrifices brought without any reference to selfish motives, and we ask how is such nobility of character possible. Then comes the psychologist who has observed the deep-seated erotic passion and shows that ultimately all these wonderful phenomena are to be explained as modifications of the sexual instinct.

The Freudian theory is practically the same mistake that Schopenhauer commits, only in its reverse aspect. Freud generalizes the lower tendency so as to cover the highest efflorescence of mental life. The general public given to being satisfied with mere words is pleased to have an answer. A word takes the place of an explanation and the philosophical demand is supplied, at least for a while.

Freud's theory has become quite prominent but we predict that it will not last. In his various investigations he has made many valuable comments but on the whole his explanations do not explain; they leave the problem where it was before. They are born of the need of a monistic explanation indicating that all phenomena are to be classified under one heading, and the success of the theory will last as long as the personality of the master holds the attention of the reading public.

P. C.